

LOVING GOD AND LOVING PEOPLE

TEXT: (Mark 12:28-33, NIV)

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

³² "Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. ³³ To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices."

INTRODUCTION

A. The Ten Commandments

- I. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3, KJV).
- II. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Exodus 20:4, KJV).
- III. "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7, KJV).
- IV. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8, KJV).
- V. "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12, KJV).
- VI. "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13, NIV).
- VII. "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14, KJV).
- VIII. "Thou shalt not steal" (Exodus 20:15, KJV).
- IX. "Thou shalt not bear false witness" (Exodus 20:16, KJV)
- X. "Thou shalt not covet" (Exodus 20:17, KJV).

B. Love Is at the Heart of the Commandments

1. "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins" (I Peter 4:8).

I. THE GREATEST COMMANDMENTS

1. "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31, NIV)
2. "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ" (Philippians 3:7-8, NIV).
3. "I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish" (Romans 1:14, NIV).

A. Love God

1. "I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD" (Psalm 116:13, NIV).
2. "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:24, NIV).

B. Love as God Loves

1. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son

into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him” (John 3:16-17, NIV).

2. “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NIV).
3. “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved” (Ephesians 2:4-5, NIV).
4. “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:9-10, NIV).

C. Love What God Loves

1. “Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings” (I Corinthians 9:19-23, NIV).
2. “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers” (I John 3:16, NIV).

II. ESTABLISH RELATIONSHIPS, EVANGELIZE, AND DISCIPLE

A. Establish Relationships

1. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (I Peter 3:15, NIV).

B. Lead People to Jesus

1. “Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on” (Mark 2:4, NIV).
2. “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28, NIV).

C. Disciple Converts

1. “‘Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.’
Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God” (II Corinthians 6:17-7:1, NIV).
2. “‘Everything is permissible’—but not everything is beneficial. ‘Everything is permissible’—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others” (I Corinthians 10:23-24, NIV).

CONCLUSION

1. “You are not far from the kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34, NIV).